

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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## DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

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July 1, 2008

TO: Each Supervisor  
FROM: *Robin Kay for*  
Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.  
Director of Mental Health  
SUBJECT: **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT SKID ROW SERVICES-  
QUARTERLY REPORT JULY 2008**

This memo is to provide the latest status report regarding continuing Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funded programs in the Skid Row area in response to your Board's April 3, 2007 motion instructing the Department of Mental Health (DMH) to take several actions related to efforts to reduce homelessness in Skid Row in coordination with communities outside of Skid Row.

Your Board instructed DMH to provide a quarterly progress report on the MHSA community-based services and supports planned for Skid Row including:

- Progress on implementation of programs planned for Skid Row, including Service Area Navigator Teams, Crisis Resolution Services, Full Service Partnerships, Wellness Centers, and the development of housing options;
- Tracking outcome measures for MHSA funded programs in the Skid Row area; and
- Tracking the number of clients who refuse medical treatment for alcohol and drug abuse.

We will continue to provide quarterly reports, as instructed.

MJS:TB:LAH:oc

Attachment

c: Sachi A. Hami, Executive Officer

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH  
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT  
SKID ROW SERVICES PROGRESS REPORT

July 1, 2008

On April 3, 2007, the Board of Supervisors approved the Department of Mental Health's (DMH) request to utilize Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funding to implement programs to reduce homelessness and promote wellness and recovery in the Skid Row area. Since that time, the Department has implemented the following programs:

- Crisis Resolution Service (CRS) at the Downtown Mental Health Center (DMHC) provides short term, intensive, mental health and supportive services, including comprehensive assessment.
- Skid Row Management Team (SRMT) provides overall administration, management and coordination of existing services and the development of new services in collaboration with local stakeholder planning groups.
- Client Run Contracted Wellness Center for the Skid Row area to serve individuals who no longer require intensive mental health services. The Department issued a Request for Services in October 2007. A Bidder's Conference was held on October 30, 2007, and Emotional Health Association dba SHARE was notified of their selection as the prospective contractor on March 10, 2008. DMH has prepared a letter to the Board of Supervisors which was sent to the Chief Executive Office (CEO) and to County Counsel for review on June 23, 2008.

A directly operated Wellness Center is planned for the Skid Row Area. Implementation date has not yet been determined. The program will serve clients that have reached a higher level of wellness and recovery and require additional, ongoing supports to sustain those gains, and to further integrate into the community.

DMH MHSA funded services in the Skid Row area serve individuals in need of an array of integrated mental health and other treatment services and supports. Other MHSA funded programs that service the Skid Row area include the DMHC Full Service Partnership (FSP) program, and the Service Area 4 Navigator Team (SANT 4) which are discussed below.

**Full Service Partnership (FSP)**

The DMHC FSP program was implemented in December 2006 and will serve a maximum of 180 consumers at capacity. This will be a continually changing enrollment of clients. As clients are stabilized, they will be moved to a less intensive level of



treatment, either in regular outpatient services, a Wellness Center, employment along with help from a private mental health provider, or supported by other options given the individualized needs of those clients. During this past quarter, the DMHC FSP program was able to identify and hire a permanent program supervisor. This stable leadership has resulted in a marked increase in the number of clients enrolled during this period. At last report (April 2008), the DMHC FSP program had enrolled 92 clients. Through May 2008 for which the outcome measures below is compiled, the number of enrollments has climbed to 132 clients. As of the writing of this report, the DMHC FSP program has a total of 148 clients enrolled, with another 20 clients pre-authorized for enrollment, and an additional 19 clients for which staff are actively conducting outreach and engagement efforts. The outcomes described below illustrate the continuing successful efforts of DMHC FSP, to reduce homelessness, incarceration, and acute psychiatric hospitalization.

- 89% decrease in days of homelessness in the year prior to enrollment compared with the period since enrollment in the program;
- 58% decrease in days of incarceration in the year prior to enrollment compared with the period since enrollment in the program;
- 73% decrease in days of psychiatric hospitalizations in the year prior to enrollment compared with the period since enrollment in the program; and
- 70% of the 132 clients enrolled in FSP, identified with a co-occurring mental health and substance abuse/use issue are actively engaged in appropriate treatment ranging from 12 Step meetings, or internal FSP co-occurring disorders outpatient programming.

#### **Service Area 4 Navigation Team (SANT)**

SANT 4 covers a wide and diverse area, which includes the Skid Row area. SANT 4 links individuals of all ages to specialized mental health services such as FSP, Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), and Adult Targeted Case Management Services (ATCMS). One of the tools utilized by SANT 4 to accomplish its goals is the Impact Unit, which serves a critical role in ensuring linkage to community programs and services. Meetings are held semi-monthly to provide Service Area 4's DMH contracted and directly operated programs the opportunity to review individual case referrals and to determine the most appropriate specialized programs (FSP, ACT, ATCMS) to serve individual consumers.

The goals of SANT 4 are:

- Provision of services for underserved, not served and inappropriately served consumers with mental illness through linkage to appropriate type and level of care;
- Linkage to housing resources;
- Successful community reintegration for persons with mental illness from institutional settings;
- Reduction in homelessness in the Skid Row area; and
- Promotion of MHSA services in the community in collaboration with service providers and community agencies.

During the last quarter, SANT 4 has:

Received 51 referrals for Transition Aged Youth (TAY) (ages 16-25).

Of the 51 total TAY referrals:

- 10 were successfully enrolled in TAY FSP
- 12 were pre-authorized for outreach and engagement services
- 2 were referred to Adult FSP
- 21 indigent referrals were referred to outpatient clinics due to indigent slots being full
- 6 were referred to other service areas

A total of 6 TAY consumers were from the Skid Row area.

Received 171 referrals for adult consumers (ages 26-59) specialized programs (ACT, FSP, and ATCMS). Of those 171 referrals, 158 of the referrals were preauthorized for services.

Of the 158 preauthorized FSP referrals:

- 145 were referred to FSP, with 92 successfully enrolled;
- 4 were referred to ACT, with 4 successfully enrolled;
- 0 was referred to ATCMS; and
- 7 declined services, with outreach and engagement efforts continuing
- 2 were referred to other Service Areas

A total of 137 adult consumers were from the Skid Row area.



### **Housing Trust Fund**

A Countywide Housing Trust Fund of \$11.5 million has been established to support the development of new permanent supportive housing for people with psychiatric disabilities. The Housing Trust Fund will provide funds for on-site supportive services and/or project-based operating subsidies for supportive housing projects and scattered site supportive services for shared housing projects. The Request for Proposals (RFP) to provide supportive services and/or to receive operating subsidies through the MHSA Housing Trust Fund RFP was released as projected on January 23, 2008, to provide supportive services and operating subsidies for supportive housing. The Department held a mandatory Proposer's Conference on February 6, 2008 with 238 people in attendance. The Department received 62 Letters of Intent to apply for the funds. Proposals were received March 10, 2008. Review of the 33 proposals received revealed requests for supportive services funding and operating expenses totaling over \$42 million. Six evaluation panels were convened to review and score the proposals. The Department is in the final stages of the selection process and anticipates announcing awards in August 2008.

### **Housing Development**

Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Housing Corporation, which provides needed housing for homeless individuals in the Skid Row area, was recently notified that they were awarded \$5.2 million through the Governor's Homeless Initiative to develop the Winston Apartments, a 40 unit permanent supportive housing project. The \$5.2 million will include funding for capital development and a capitalized operating reserve. As a condition of funding, the Governor's Homeless Initiative required that local county mental health departments would commit MHSA funds for the provision of mental health services or FSP level services for the residents of the funded units. The Department of Mental Health, through DMHC's FSP Program, has committed to provide mental health services to qualifying residents of the Winston Apartments. Construction on the Winston Apartments is to begin July 2008. Based on the construction schedule, the units should be available for leasing as early as March or April 2009.

SRO Housing Corporation has also secured \$14.6 million through a variety of funding sources, including Los Angeles Housing Department's Permanent Supportive Housing Program, Los Angeles County's Community Development Commission, and tax credits to develop the James Woods Apartments. The James Woods Apartments will include 53 single room occupancy units, of which thirty-one will be for the special needs population-chronically homeless with a mental illness. DMHC's FSP Program will collaborate with SRO Housing Corporation to provide mental health services for qualified residents of the 31 units that are reserved for special needs populations - persons that are chronically homeless with mental illness. As of this date, the James

Woods Apartments are under construction with a scheduled completion date of March 2009. It is anticipated that the 31 units that have been identified for special needs population (chronically homeless with a mental illness) will be available for leasing in April 2009.

### **MHSA Housing Program**

On August 6, 2007 the California Department of Mental Health (State DMH) and the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) launched the MHSA Housing Program that provides funding to support capital development and capitalized operating subsidies for supportive housing for individuals with psychiatric disabilities and their families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. State DMH estimates that it will allocate approximately \$115 million to Los Angeles County over the next three years for the development of supportive housing, of which \$40 million can be used for capitalized operating subsidies.

In November 2007, DMH released the Expression of Interest, a non-competitive solicitation inviting interested parties to submit a Letter of Interest in response to the notice of available funding for capital development and operating subsidies. In mid-March, an introductory information and training for individuals and organizations not familiar with the requirements associated with supportive housing projects and/or receiving public funds. Also included were those individuals and organizations that had submitted incomplete Letters of Interest and/or those reviewed by the MHSA Housing Advisory Board but had not recommended further development at this point due to insufficient information, or other issues, and those that had further questions, or had expressed an interest in providing shared housing. This included individuals and organizations that were not traditional supportive housing developers. To date, the Department has received twenty-nine Letters of Interest at various stages of development. On June 10, 2008, the Board of Supervisors approved a Board letter authorizing the Department to sign an assignment agreement permitting the transfer of the Los Angeles County allocation of \$115 million to CalHFA for the administration of the MHSA Housing Program.

### **Crisis Resolution Services (CRS)**

CRS is a short term (60 days or less), outpatient based, intensive, clinical and case management program that provides crisis intervention and stabilization for new and returning (disengaged) clients. Services include but are not limited to: emergency shelter, transitional and permanent housing, referral for medical and dental services, benefits establishment, intensive case management, psychiatric services and medication, short-term psychotherapy, and crisis intervention.



CRS was implemented on October 11, 2007. On May 12, 2008, CRS began operating five days a week. The program will extend its days of operation to include Saturday mornings starting August 1, 2008.

Since implementation, CRS has:

- Opened 633 new cases, averaging 6 new intakes daily;
- Reduced attrition rate among newly enrolled clients by 32%;
- Provided linkage to emergency, transitional or permanent housing to 90% of homeless clients on day of screening or intake; and
- Engaged 81% of all clients with a co-occurring mental health and substance use/abuse issue to engage for enrollment in treatment. Motivational engagement efforts with the remaining 19% are ongoing.

The program provides frequent client follow-up appointments with program staff, and employs a "whatever-it-takes" approach to addressing individual needs, including mental health services, housing, physical health care, and assistance with benefits establishment.

2.0 FTE CRS Psychiatrist positions remain open. Aggressive recruitment efforts will continue until these positions are filled.

### **Skid Row Management Team (SRMT)**

During this past quarter the DMH Skid Row Management team continued its efforts to sustain its engagement with community providers and stakeholder groups, including consumers, and loft dwellers, to obtain critical input about the many issues affecting the Skid Row area. The SRMT has held monthly meetings of the Skid Row Community Advisory Board (SRCAB) and with the Skid Row Homeless Healthcare Initiative. Both of these entities are collectives of Skid Row stakeholders (including consumers) that are dedicated to collaborative and integrative efforts to develop more accessible, and effective social and health care services.

SRMT activities over the past quarter have included:

- Meeting with Amy Luftig Viste, Senior Health Deputy to Supervisor Gloria Molina, Dr. Tony Beliz, and others to present and discuss current DMH MHSA programs in the Skid Row Area;
- Collaboration with DMH Contracts Division to finalize a draft of the Client Run Wellness Center Board letter recommending the awarding of a contract between

DMH and Emotional Health Association dba SHARE. The draft Board letter was sent to CEO and County Counsel for review on June 23, 2008;

- Finalized the transition of interim mental health services for participants of Project 50 from DMHC to JWCH Institute; Inc (JWCH).
- Finalized the Medi-Cal certification of LAMP, Inc. as an outpatient mental health clinic through collaboration with Service Planning Area (SPA) IV District Chief and DMH Program Review Division;
- Hosted and participated in weekly meetings with Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), Department of Public Health (DPH), and Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) regarding the ongoing provision of collaborative services to homeless families with minors;
- Meeting with the leadership team of Para Los Ninos to discuss coordination of mental treatment and provision of other social services for homeless families with minors;
- Represented DMH in the ongoing Leavey Center inter-agency service integration planning workgroups. Other participant agencies are JWCH, Weingart Center Foundation, Homeless Healthcare, Los Angeles, and County agencies: Departments of Public Health, Health Services, and Alcohol and Drug Programs Administration;
- Hosted monthly meetings with DMH Skid Row Community Advisory Board (SRCAB) which elected new co-chairs at its June meeting. The new co-chairs are Charles Porter of Coalition East Prevention Program and Jana Plasters, Vice President of Weingart Center Foundation. Additionally, the SRCAB has created two workgroups:
  - Representative Payee Expansion Workgroup, which is aimed at identifying additional local Skid Row agencies that would act as payees for client benefits; and
  - Planning Workgroup, which will address current and future mental health needs of the Skid Row area.
- Hosted a MHSA Prevention and Early Intervention Focus Group for stakeholders in the Skid Row area.



- Presentation to a group of TAY and Adults at United Coalition East Prevention Program on the MHSA and the service impact to Skid Row residents;
- Represented DMH at the Skid Row Homeless Healthcare Initiative, which serves to develop collaborative and integrated physical and behavioral healthcare initiatives in the Skid Row area;
- Meeting with Service Area IV Management Team on a weekly basis to coordinate the transition and transfer of oversight responsibility for DMH contract agencies in the Skid Row area to the SRMT. Full transition of responsibility will occur upon the appointment of a permanent District Chief for the DMH SRMT; and
- Coordinated the presentation of Los Angeles Centers for Alcohol and Drug Abuse (L.A. CADA), a contracted Alcohol and Drug Programs Administration agency to the staffs of DMHC Outpatient, and DMHC CRS to facilitate treatment coordination for shared clients.

SRMT will continue to work collaboratively with area stakeholders, service providers, and residents to enhance mental health services and supports in the Skid Row area.

### **Summary**

In summary, the Department of Mental Health continues to demonstrate significant progress in enhancing and increasing community based mental health, housing, and other resources in the Skid Row area through the development of newly funded MHSA programs, and ongoing collaborations with local stakeholders. All of these programs focus on reducing homelessness for individuals with mental illness and breaking the costly cycle of emergency and inpatient care, and incarceration, while promoting recovery and successful community reintegration.